

have been developing. Nor can we regard as less striking those internal dissensions which drove the pilgrim Fathers from England, to found in the far west a country which should acknowledge its inferiority to England only in this respect, that the one is the mother, and the other the daughter. History, rightly interpreted, shows us many instances of national crime being followed by its appropriate punishment. " The expulsion of the Moors, the most industrious and valuable inhabitants of the Peninsula, has entailed weakness upon the Spanish monarchy, which the subsequent lapse of two centuries has been unable to repair. The reaction against the Roman atrocities produced the great league, of which William was the head; it sharpened the swords of Eugene and Marlborough; it closed in mourning the reign of Louis XV. Nor did the national punishment stop here. The massacre of St. Bartholomew, and revocation of the edict of Nantes, were the chief, among remote but certain, causes of the French Revolution, and all the unutterable miseries which it brought upon the Bourbon race, and the professors of the Romish faith. "

Mankind have in all ages experienced the greatest interest, and yet the greatest difficulty, in interpreting those events of providence which are afflictive in their character. We have not arrived at that stage of our investigation at which we may determine precisely the meaning of physical evil; but it is evident that the ends served by it in the providence of God are of a mixed character.

Sometimes it seems to be PUNITIVE, and the expression of the Divine disapproval of sin. We can take no lower or lesser view of it in some of its forms.

At other times it seems to be PREVENTIVE of evil. There are dark tunnels through which we must pass to speed us on our way; and there are also circuitous routes prescribed to preserve us from the danger lying in the shorter path. In

every shape
in which it may come, affliction is disagreeable at
the time, but
it is, notwithstanding, often like the mantle of
snow, which in
these colder regions covers the springing grain
in winter—a
means of preservation from a greater and more
fatal scourge.

* Alison's Marlborough.

f See this whole subject treated in the light of Scripture,
ancient with the results
without, the processes of the highest philosophy, in the two
admirable works of
Dr. Buchanan on Affliction.